(c) in what manner if would help Indian in meeting its petroleum requirements?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) While, there is no formal proposal to set up a Asian Gas Grid, proposals to import gas from Iran through Iran -Pakistan-India pipeline and from Myanmar through Myanmar-Bangladesh-India pipeline are under consideration of the Government. The possibility of India's participation in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline project is also examination.

The concept of Asian Gas Grid was broached by the Minister (P&NG) at the Third Asian Gas Buyers' Summit held in New Delhi on Februrary 14-15, 2005, thereby throwing open the thought for public discussion.

A Gas Grid, connecting India with gas producing countries, would facilitate gas importas by us, thereby improving out energy security.

Change in Oil Exploration Licensing Policy

†3498. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to bring changes in oil exploration licensing policy:

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to introduce single window facility for the convenience of the investors;

(d) whether Government have received any complaints from the investors; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Government of India approved the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in 1997 and it become effective in 1999, since when licenses for exploration are being awarded through an

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

international competitive bidding system. National Oil Companies are required to compete with Indian and foreign companies to secure Petroleum Exploration Licenses. Four rounds of bidding have so far been completed under NELP. The fifth is underway with bids closing on 31st May, 2005. While the overall fiscal and contractural terms under NELP have more or less remained the same, consultations are held with all stakeholders at the end of each round to suggest and incorporate improvements for succeeding rounds. The same process was followed for the fifth round of NELP, which was announced on 4th January 2005. The fifth round also incorporates some new features which consititute an improvement over earlier rounds. A summary of the improvements made in the Fifth Round may be seen at the Statement. (*see* below)

(c) to (e) A single window facility is being established in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas to facilitate investor interaction with the other authorities concerned after the PSC is signed. In order to address problems being faced by the various operating companies from time to time, this Ministry has constituted two Inter-Ministerial Committees (IMC); one under the Chairmanship of Minister (P&NG) and another under the Chairmanship of Secretary (P&NG) . The Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary (P&NG). *inter-alia*, is to discuss and facilitate resolution of issues related to Co-ordination between different Government agencies in the matters of clearances for security, environment, defence etc. The IMC set up under the Chairmanship of Minister is to review the matters relating to the expenditious Exploration and Production of crude oil and natural gas in the country These Committees facilitate problems faced by the investors and expedite various clearances and also monitor exploration and production activities of operating companies.

Statement

Summary of improvements made in the Fifth Round of NELP

(i) All geo-scientific data has been made available online through the internet to enable companies to view data at their own convenience and location.

(ii) Work stations equipped with software were provided at data centres at London, Houston, Calgary and Dubai. This enabled companies to analyse and interpret the data at the data centre itself.

(iii) In order to provide marketing stability to the companies, the government shall exercise its option to take its profit share of

natural gas in cash or kind for a block of 5 years instead of such option being made every year as in the previous rounds.

(iv) Data packages and information dockets can be purchased at a discounted price.

(v) In order to encourage small and medium size investors, companies having a net worth of US $ 500 Million or more will not be required to give a bank guarantee towards Minimum Work Programme commitment in respect of onland and shallow water blocks. This threshold value in the previous round was US$ 1000 Million.

(iv) In order to bring more transparency in the bidding process, weightages for all bid evaluation criteria including weightages for sub-criteria have now been made public under NELP-V for the first time.

(vii) Details of all operational blocks from earlier rounds such as work programme, fiscal terms etc. were available at Data Centres. This enabled companies to assess existing work programme as well as other bidding parametres while formulating their own bids and may also help them in forming strategic alliances.

HPCL's policy on disposal of oil stock

†3499. SHRI ISAM SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps renovated by Delhi division of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (H.P.C.L.) in Delhi during the last three years;

(b) whether old stock has been deposited in godowns;

(c) whether any scrap Committee was constituted to sell the old stock;

(d) the amount deposited in H.P.C.L. after sale of the scrap during the last three years;

(e) whether it is a fact that the old stock has not been deposited in godown and also the money has not been deposited in the company after sale of the scrap and where has the old stock gone; and

(f) the rules of H.P.C.L. company to dispose off the old stock?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The number of retail outlets (petrol pumps) renovated

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